

REMARKS

As of the filing of the present reply, claims 11-14 and 17-20 were pending in the above-identified US Patent Application.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 11 and 17-20 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,492,038 to Rigney et al. (Rigney) under 35 USC §102(e), rejected claims 11 and 14 as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,835,465 to Allen et al. (Allen) under 35 USC §102(e), and rejected claims 12 and 13 as unpatentable over Allen in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,312,832 to Alperine et al. (Alperine) under 35 USC §103.

In response, Applicants have amended remaining independent claim 11 to incorporate the limitations of its dependent claim 17, and canceled claims 17 and 19 in view of the amendments to their amended parent claim 11. Because claim 17 was not rejected under §§102 and 103 based on Allen, Applicants believe these rejections are overcome.

Regarding the §102(e) rejection based on Rigney, Applicants submit herewith a Rule 132 Declaration by which Applicant Ramgopal Darolia declares that he conceived/invented the subject matter cited by the Examiner as disclosed but not claimed by Rigney under 35 USC §102(e). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC

§102(e) based on Rigney.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request that their patent application be given favorable reconsideration.

Should the Examiner have any questions with respect to any matter now of record, Applicants' representative may be reached at (219) 462-4999.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Domenica N.S. Hartman', written in a cursive style.

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Attachment: Declaration of Ramgopal Darolia